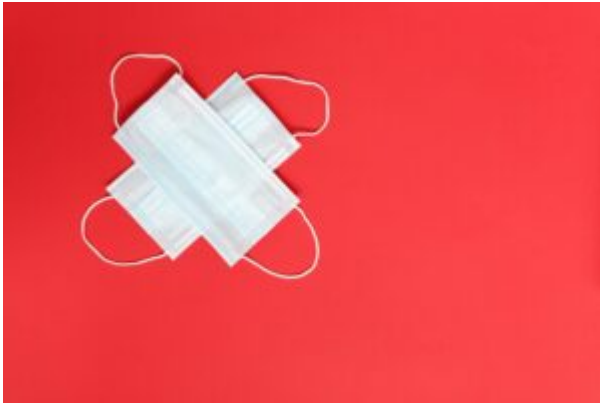


# COVID Restrictions on Religious Gatherings Don't Violate Charter Rights



The RCMP ticketed and later arrested a pastor for violating public health restrictions on the number of attendees allowed at religious services. Rather than pay the fines, the pastor chose to remain in custody and filed a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of COVID restrictions on religious gatherings. But the Alberta court was unmoved and tossed the case. Limiting religious gatherings to contain COVID was a necessary health measure that didn't violate the pastor's rights to free speech, religious freedom and right to public assembly, it concluded [*R v Coates*, 2021 ABPC 162 (CanLII), June 7, 2021].